

## THE LESSONS OF PATHOLOGY

IT is a truism to say that modern man knows far more about the bad life than he does about the good life. Pain is an unmistakable common denominator of evil, and while there are many kinds of pain, all of them hurt. A man needs no proof of the fact that he hurts. He may need, or ought to want, proof of explanations as to why he hurts, but here his certainty, and often his wish for certainty, tend to diminish, since theories of cause and effect about pain are largely dependent upon knowledge of the good life, and not much knowledge of this sort is available.

If we are to get anywhere in understanding our situation, it is necessary to take some such analysis as this as the basis for further inquiry. For a solution of any sort, one must separate the fixed matters from the unfixed or uncertain matters. In the present human condition, the fixed matters are the experience of pain, disorder, and aimlessness. The unfixed matters are the reasons for our pain, disorder, etc. If pain can be taken as evidence of deviation from health or normality, then it is obvious that the correction or elimination of the pain will depend upon our capacity to define and measure the deviations. And if we have no account of health or normality, how can we define and measure the deviations?

So, we need a philosophy or ground which openly admits our ignorance in this extremely important respect. It is bad enough not to know, but it is far worse to ignore one's ignorance or to pretend to a knowledge that does not exist.

Before going any further, it is advisable to argue this point: Are we *really* ignorant of the good life or the rules of the good life? It will save a lot of time and space to admit at the outset that this is one of those questions which must have a yes-and-no answer. There is a level in every human being's psychological life at which he

believes himself to know considerably better than he does. There are broad ethical generalities with both individual and social application that men observe only fitfully or not at all. The mandates of this half-lit world of "ought" derive from vague intuitions, the nag of conscience, loosely formed impressions of what moral or other authorities have declared, and the vast cultural inheritance of religion, law, and folkways from the past.

But is this "knowledge"? It is not, we are obliged to admit, enough of knowledge to make us change. Here, perhaps, we should say only that this is the area of the complex motivations of human behavior. We need to know more about this area before we can speak to this point with any finality.

On the other hand, there are circumscribed regions of experience and investigation where our knowledge seems more precise. We usually call these regions fields of "science." Ortega y Gasset is helpful in characterizing this sort of knowledge. In *Toward a Philosophy of History*, he says:

Scientific truth is characterized by its exactness and the certainty of its predictions. But these admirable qualities are contrived by science at the cost of remaining on a plane of secondary problems, leaving intact the ultimate and decisive questions. . . . science is but a small part of the human mind and organism. If the physicist detains, at the point where his method ends, the hand with which he delineates the facts, the human being behind each physicist prolongs the line thus begun and carries it on to its termination, as an eye beholding an arch in ruins will of itself complete the missing airy curve. . . .

The past century, resorting to all but force, tried to restrict the human mind within the limits set to exactness. Its violent effort to turn its back on last problems is called agnosticism. But such endeavor seems neither fair nor sensible. That science is incapable of solving in its own way those fundamental questions is no sufficient reason for slighting them as did the fox with the high-hung

grapes, or for calling them myths and urging us to drop them altogether. How can we live turning a deaf ear to the last dramatic questions? Where does the world come from and whither is it going? Which is the supreme power of the cosmos, what the essential meaning of life? We cannot breathe confined to a realm of secondary and intermediate themes. We need a comprehensive perspective foreground and background, not a maimed scenery, a horizon stripped of infinite distances. . . . We are given no escape from last questions. In one fashion or another they are in us, whether we like it or not.

Two comments seem pertinent. First, Ortega confirms an aspect of the general analysis with which we began. Second, scientific inquiry since Ortega wrote this book has been increasingly in the direction of the "fundamental questions." That is, those fields of science which are concerned with specifically human problems are fields in which there has been dramatic progress in recent years. We speak of the psychological sciences. It is true, of course, that psychology, especially psychotherapy, involves the practice of art as well as of science, but the transfer of scientific disciplines to psychotherapy has added a noticeable temper of impartiality and painstaking search, while recognition of the truth behind Ortega's observation has enormously diminished the tiresomely "mechanistic" approach of many workers in this field.

It seems fair to say that present-day psychological and psychotherapeutic research, if not directly concerned with the last great questions, is at least touching on problems which are peripheral to such questions. It is the therapists, further, whose diagnoses of what is wrong with modern man are increasingly expressed in language which raises ethical, moral, and philosophical issues.

Out of this development, or rather from response to it by intelligent individuals, come fresh formulations of constructive attitude. An illustration is the statement by Lillian Smith, quoted last week (in Review) from her introduction to Jim Peck's *Freedom Ride*:

I think we are, once more, completing a spiral curve: the absurd and naive skepticism, the disbelief of the nineteenth century and much of the twentieth is turning into a new faith frankly based on the uncertainties, frankly grounded on the knowledge that while more and more can be proved by science, the questioners always arrive at an invisible line where proof ends. . . . dehumanization will cease only when we learn to believe that we have no inalienable right to a proof or an answer; the time has come when we must acknowledge that small answers won't do, . . . the world's small answers must be brushed away so that the questions, Who am I? What is death? Who is God? can be heard again.

Ortega was a philosopher of history. The psychologists to whom we have referred—men such as A. H. Maslow, Erich Fromm, Clark Moustakas, and Carl Rogers—form their views from the experience of case histories, while sociologists such as David Riesman and novelists like Lillian Smith are students of current social events. They all press upon us the need for attention to the great questions. In other words, the analysis of human pain leads those who study it in the same direction and toward the same general conclusion, regardless of whether the pain is an individual or a social phenomenon.

In any situation requiring answers, there are three possibilities. You can reach the right answers, you can reach the wrong answers, or you can take your stand on the fact that you don't have the answers.

Interpreting these possibilities historically, we might say that once upon a time human beings had the "right" answers, but could not keep them, or could not keep them straight and make them work. The evidence for this is in the fact that intuitive scholars and research psychologists and sociologists are irresistibly drawn to ancient philosophy and even ancient *mores* for light on the problems of the present. The best illustration of this tendency is Joseph Campbell's *Hero with a Thousand Faces*, although numerous other works might be named. One would be Edmond Taylor's *Richer by Asia*, another, *The Hopi Way* by Laura Thompson and Alice Joseph. What seems to be

the case is that there is profound truth in ancient hierarchical social orders, myths, and religious philosophies, but that for us, when we dig it out and isolate it, this truth is profaned or curiously inapplicable in the form that it comes to us. Possibly the conversion of subjective values by the ancients into rules of a theocratic state or society is what spoils them. At any rate, those truths will not do for us what they did for the ancients, unless we discover some way of making them contemporary truths. What would make them contemporary? First, they would have to be entirely purified of their political implications or correlations—rendered, that is, into contemporary psychological values. But this is where the attempt breaks down, since we do not have or are not able to "believe" the metaphysics which the ancients took for granted.

The second possibility—reaching the wrong answers and imagining them to be right—seems historically to be in part a function of the breakdown or failure of the first possibility. That is, when the classical answers of the organic society are corrupted or misunderstood, or become means to mass deception and exploitation, a point is reached where men reject them entirely and start looking for another set of truths. This process reached a climax with nineteenth-century materialism, referred to by Miss Smith as absurd and naive skepticism and disbelief. The prevailing ideas of this period, as Ortega noted, gained their reputation for accuracy and excellence "at the cost of remaining on a plane of secondary problems." As technical truths, they were fine, but as comprehensive means for dealing with the issues of human life, they were irrelevant in meaning and abortive in effect. Our culture is shot through with a thousand petty conceits over petty successes achieved through our mastery of technical truths. As Fromm put it: "Means have been transformed into ends, the production and consumption of things has become the aim of life, to which living is subordinated." If you listen to the radio these days, you can't help but hear the current publicity campaign being carried on to

increase the appreciation and gratitude of American citizens for the services of modern advertising. Advertising, the listener is informed, is at the root of all the blessings of mass production. These commercial plugs for the advertising profession are a blaring documentation of Dr. Fromm's assertion.

The inescapable conclusion is that the right answers on the plane of secondary problems turn into absolutely false answers when they are used as a source of values or answers to the last great questions, or primary problems.

So what are we to do?

The short answer to this question, the fulfillment of the third possibility, is in Miss Smith's declaration of "a new faith based on the uncertainties," and the interesting thing about this formulation is that it arose in a context of social struggle for the rights of man promised to all by the eighteenth-century revolution—out of Miss Smith's musing interpretation of the daring and accomplishment of the Freedom Riders of 1961.

Let us suppose some further possibilities. Let us suppose, first, that there is no essential difference between the truths known to ancient philosophers, which were made into social systems, and the truths sought by us. But let us suppose also that there is a very great difference in ourselves, *vis à vis* those truths. There are the truths of the kindergarten and the truths of the university. In some sense they are the same, but they are not the same in a sense that would permit their use to be transposed. The natural freedom of the kindergarten child would be ridiculous in the university, and vice versa. Human function is different at different stages of maturity. The moral law which must be explained to a child is a dead letter when explained to a man. Ultimately, you do not "tell" or "explain" the truth to any human being. You make compromises, of course; but you compromise for educational purposes differently, according to the maturity of the pupil. A man may be said to be mature when his teachers no longer are able to play the game of

compromise with him for his own benefit. A mature man stands at the frontier of the unknown. You don't tell him what to think about what is "out there." We know that each man has to find that out for himself. Facing this reality is being grown up. Miss Smith's credo is a faith for grown-up human beings. We submit that it is the only faith that can be made to work in this and future epochs of history.

On these terms, education is a process of slowly reducing the element of compromise or pretense to knowledge in relation to the child and student, until it is gone altogether and the individual is on his own. Grown-ups may compare notes on what they think they are finding out, but they never *tell* anyone else what to think.

Of course, the solutions transmitted from generation to generation on the questions of the plane of secondary problems, are not pretentious or compromised. They are facts, but these facts do not touch "the ultimate and decisive questions." Whenever there is confusion about these levels of understanding, education becomes an unholy mess. This is the whole point of Robert M. Hutchins' lifelong labors in behalf of general education.

How do you frame the comparison between the primary and the secondary questions, so that there can be intellectual and moral clarity in making the necessary distinctions? This is an essential problem of our time. Dr. Hutchins tried to do it in the context of the Great Books. So far as we are concerned, he succeeded, but he didn't succeed for everyone. This method of illustrating the difference between philosophical questions and technical questions requires an inborn or natural sense of the reality in abstract ideas and ethical conceptions. Not everybody has this sense, or not everybody has it well enough developed to take the great books seriously, as they must, if the educational project is to go on.

Fortunately, there is another context in which this comparison may be made. It is functional rather than rational or verbal. We have called this

context the "lessons of pathology." The limitation of this context is that usually only the specialist, the psychotherapist or trained psychologist, or the intuitive and sympathetic novelist or writer, can recognize its existence. It is the task of the therapist to create as well as he can the therapeutic situation. The "right" therapeutic situation varies with the patient. The conceptual tools of the therapist are also a factor in making the therapeutic situation. Most important of all, however, is the equipment of the patient. The therapist spends most of his time trying to figure out what the patient has to work with; then he tries to show this material, these means, to the patient, and encourage him to go to work and get well. A characteristic development of modern psychology in recent years is the turning of responsibility for getting well back to the patient, as fast as he can take or accept it. The art of the therapist is in estimating the optimum rate of return of the patient to responsibility. Accepting responsibility is getting well, for who knows the goal?

After men do this kind of work for a few years, they can hardly avoid some general thinking about its implications. What, for example, would be a therapeutic situation for *society*? The therapist who lets himself go in this direction has to face the frightening possibility that he may become a social reformer, by the same unwelcome compulsion as that which drove Plato's philosopher back into the cave of shadows. Erich Fromm's book, *The Sane Society*, is doubtless a response to this impulse. Dr. Fromm's book is the most tentative sort of work, politically speaking, but it is rich with insights concerning what sort of social situations might work therapeutically for the common good. We shall probably have many more such books during the next twenty years or so. How can men like that, who see what they see, keep still?

We should like to conclude this discussion with the report of something that happened at Synanon House a few months ago. Synanon, for

new readers of MANAS, is a place on the beach at Santa Monica where some ninety-odd ex-drug-addicts have gathered to live in common quarters (the building is an old armory) in order to help each other get well. The dynamics of the healing process as encountered at Synanon are too wonderful and too subtle for brief description (see articles in MANAS for Sept. 14, 1960, and Feb. 8, 1961). Here we shall tell only what happened on this occasion. A visitor who had been asked to talk to the members of Synanon had called it a "transition society," a situation which they would eventually leave, when they felt stable or strong enough to go back into the world. The chief founder of Synanon, Charles (Chuck) Dederich, challenged the expression. "Why," he asked, "should we assume that Synanon is only a transition society?" Maybe, he pointed out, it is a better society than the society "outside"—the one from which the addicts took flight with heroin.

Well, you have to think about that for a while. You have to think about it when you are trying to get together some ideas for even the most tentative of norms of the good society. You could argue that Synanon is an artificial society created by people who want to share their self-help program because they can't make it alone. But what does "artificial" mean, nowadays? Is a small, getting-well society really more artificial than an ordinary middle-class community anywhere else? Are the people "outside" really making it? The allegedly "normal" society outside is making a lot of things that the ex-addicts may be disinclined to have any part of—nuclear bombs, for example.

A pared-down community of ex-addicts may have more actual health in it than any number of social formations in the outside world. If you start reading books about special therapeutic situations, even novels such as *The World Next Door* by Fritz Peters, *The Cobweb* by William Gibson, *The Mark*, by Charles E. Israel, or an autobiography like Walker Winslow's *If a Man Be Mad*, you may conclude that we just don't know,

any more, what normal means. Maybe it is something the best men among us create as they go along, and maybe some of the clearest instances of what the best men among us create as they go along, and maybe some of the clearest instances of what the best men are creating is to be found in the therapeutic situations which have been built up and grown up around the very sick of one sort or another. It is just possible that when an entire society becomes sick, the best possible examples of norms to work toward will be found in the special lessons of particular forms of pathology. Should this be the case, then the Synanons of our time might turn out to be authentic transition societies in another and far truer sense.

## *REVIEW*

### "BEYOND THE REACH OF SENSE"

LATE last year, the City College of New York announced plans for a parapsychology laboratory. *This Week* for Jan. 28 tells of a center for experimental parapsychology at the University of Alberta in Canada. For some time, the universities of Oxford and Cambridge in England, Duke University in America, the universities of Utrecht and Munich in Europe, have carried on extensive research in extrasensory perception, and doctoral theses on ESP are becoming fairly common. So something new in man's perspective on man has clearly been added during recent decades of the twentieth century.

Rosalind Heywood's *Beyond the Reach of Sense* (E. P. Dutton, N.Y., 1961; \$3.95—published in England as *The Sixth Sense*) is an interesting, well-written history of the peculiar and sometimes abortive beginnings of scientific psychical research and an evaluation of the developments in this field since the Society for Psychical Research was formed in London in 1882. Mrs. Heywood notes for ESP research "an advance towards respectability which even if slow was unthinkable twenty-five years ago," and remarks that the change "is a tribute, not only to the tiny band of heretics who continued to seek their quarry undeterred by enormous difficulties, but also to the open-mindedness of some in academic high places." She adds: "The most difficult mental act of all is to escape from prevailing doctrine. But, from the point of view of the heretic, progress towards recognition has seemed discouragingly slow and he has been driven to console himself with Whitehead's saying that all really new ideas have a certain aspect of foolishness when they are first produced."

How is the average reader to evaluate the many shifts and turnings which have taken place in psychical research? *Why* has the now-established reality of ESP phenomena been so long in coming? On this point, Mrs. Heywood

contributes some thoughtful paragraphs. She writes.

There seem to be two main reasons. The first is that we accept without question certain hypotheses on which both our practical activities and our scientific theories are based. We take it for granted that every event has a cause which precedes it, and that no event can have an effect before it has happened; also that for any event to influence another there must be some transfer of energy between the two. Most of us nowadays also take it for granted that consciousness is no more than an aspect of physical processes, that it is non-existent apart from a physical brain, and that it can only become aware of its surroundings through the medium of a physical nervous system. In other words, we do not accept that mind can be separated from body. These assumptions fit in with the whole enormous body of information acquired through the natural sciences, and are believed in by most educated men in the twentieth century as implicitly as Christians believe in Heaven. To traditional science, then, claims for telepathy or precognition are a heresy greater than that of Copernicus and too absurd to be taken seriously.

It is a natural instinct to revolt against the unknown, particularly against an unknown which has in the past been labelled abnormal, supernatural, uncanny, and has been associated with fraud and superstition throughout the ages. But a bank-note is no less a bank-note because there are forgeries. And for the faculty of extra-sensory awareness of events distant in space and time there is now testimony far stronger than that on which many historical facts are accepted. At the same time it must be remembered that even in less controversial subjects there is usually a time lag between discoveries which run counter to current belief and their general acceptance, and there are signs that in psychical research too the mental climate is slowly beginning to modify.

These observations, of course, are applicable to every situation in which the mind faces a new horizon. Inquiries concerning man's psychological or mental structure are best pursued with an attitude of attentive expectancy and a determination to approach each question as if one's own were the first mind which had ever thought. Joseph Wood Krutch describes the problem of mental blocks in *The Measure of Man* by saying that we seem to fall into the delusion of thinking that only those explanations which

answer to previously-established conceptions of "common sense" are tenable. And yet, how much do we *really* know about everyday phenomena? Mrs. Heywood calls attention to this point in her introductory chapter:

Man is a born explorer and in this era of expanding science new marvels appear on his horizon every day. Not least of the mysteries surrounding him is his own nature and here of recent years he has made great headway. Biologists are laying bare secrets of inheritance through Mendelian genes, the chemical equilibrium of the body and that superb electrical instrument the brain. Psychologists are probing ever deeper into the astonishing complexities of mental states. But we still have far to go. Take, for example, the nature of memory. Every man alive is remembering all the time. Yet nobody knows how he does it, although there are plenty of theories. And take consciousness itself. We know that impacts from the exterior world on the senses travel by way of the nervous system to the brain. But what happens next? How are these impacts translated into consciousness? Again, nobody knows.

But the most distinguished thinkers of this or any other time are those who exchange "common sense" for uncommon sense. As a *Saturday Review* writer on the Heywood book puts it: "The persons she summons as witnesses stand in the foremost row of brilliant minds in science, the classics, religion, and philosophy." In a lengthy appendix Mrs. Heywood lists varying hypotheses to account for the proven but unexplained reality of ESP by contemporary men of eminence, including biologist Sir Alister Hardy, psychologists C. J. Jung and Gardner Murphy, and professors Broad, Price and Thouless. One of Price's contributions, for instance, "has been to suggest a possible habitat for minds": "He argues that there may be something intermediate between mind and matter as we ordinarily understand them. That something would be material in the sense that it was extended in space (though not necessarily in physical space) and yet it would have some of the properties commonly attributed to minds. *Psi* phenomena had already driven Myers and a past president of the S.P.R., Professor C. A. Mace, to envisage a 'something'

upon which could be recorded the pattern of events. Mace labelled it the psychic ether. And the idea, of course, is widespread in the mystical philosophies of the East."

Reading the Heywood book, one is again impressed by the probability that we are entering an era of new metaphysics—linked with rather than divorced from the physics of the previously established sciences. And this book helps the passage. Mrs. Heywood seems capable and perceptive in dealing with the interpenetrating forefronts of investigation of the mind. She ends with a wise distinction:

We should perhaps remind ourselves that increased *psi* awareness does not mean increased spirituality, even though in the saints the two have sometimes appeared to develop together. Through knowledge of *psi* we may learn more about our nature; by means of *psi* some of us may experience the unity of mankind and eventually escape into a wider world. Even so they will only perceive what it is in them to perceive and they will still be in a world of form and phenomena. Spirituality is something different in kind from these, something that shines through forms and can do so in Belsen as well as in Paradise. It is not the automatic reward of taking drugs or guessing through packs of cards.

But it would be unfair and misleading to end a record of careful, down-to-earth research on a note of wild surmise. The task of the psychical researcher is to explore his subject with the patient devotion of the scientist who is not blind to the unexpected and does not reject the new, but will nevertheless subject them to long and relentless scrutiny. And if we do not cease from exploration, if we follow humbly wherever nature leads, it may be that "the end of all our exploring/ Will be to arrive where we started/ And know the place for the first time."

## COMMENTARY

### RECENT ACQUISITIONS

OUR most recent pamphlet acquisition is by no means new—it first appeared in England in June, 1943, and the currently available edition was printed at the end of 1946. Yet we know of no brief discussion of the problems of creating a world order or society as helpful to the general reader as David Mitrany's *A Working Peace System*, available from the National Peace Council, 144 Southhampton Row, London, W.C.I, England, at fifty cents a copy. It is, as the subtitle says, "An argument for the functional development of international organization."

The author seems to display a perceptive grasp of the processes of social change, contrasting in particular the difference between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in respect to the alterations which have been accomplished in the forms of social organization. We are by no means well-informed in this area of study and we recommend Prof. Mitrany's work more on the ground of his manifest common sense and his recognition of practical psychological issues than from a full understanding of his proposals. He says:

For us the question is how far the peoples are ripe for consent, and the answer must determine our line of action. If the new international experiment is to be effective it must have real tasks of government entrusted to it. But at the same time it must in its make-up accept the present reality of a world that is divided into many national states. The most one could hope for during the period of transition is that national governments should act as willing agencies of the incipient international authority; for even if it were possible to deed formal authority in full to an international body, the elements which go to the making of power—raw materials, man-power, industrial potential and strategic positions—would in the nature of things, until national boundaries and authorities are done away with altogether, still remain in the grasp of particular national groups. Nothing could be more barren and confusing, therefore, than the habit of mind which, in the words of Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, "thinks that we lack an international government only because no one has conceived a

proper blue-print of it. Therefore they produce such blue-prints in a great profusion. These pure constitutionalists have a touching faith in the power of a formula over the raw stuff of history."

What Prof. Mitrany has in mind is put in these terms:

The only sound sense of peaceful change is to do internationally what it does nationally: to make changes of frontiers unnecessary by making frontiers meaningless through the continuous development of common activities and interests across them. A change of frontier is bound to disturb the social life of the groups concerned, no matter whether it comes peacefully or forcibly. The purpose of peaceful change can only be to prevent such disturbance; one might say indeed that the true task of peaceful change is to remove the need and the wish for changes of frontiers. The functional approach may be justifiably expected to do precisely that: it would help the growth of such positive and constructive common work, of common habits and interests, making frontier lines meaningless by overlaying them with a natural growth of common activities and common administrative agencies. . . . This may seem a limping way towards world community. Yet the eagerness for a finished constitution may actually hold up progress.

. . .

This subject is so large and it has so many facets that there are doubtless dozens of constructive proposals which might be considered. But a plan which neglects the practical obstacles Prof. Mitrany is concerned with overcoming will not get very far.

---

#### PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTES

Norman Z. Alcock, a Canadian nuclear physicist, has proposed the creation of "a world-wide network of Peace Research Institutes" to be staffed by trained social scientists whose objective would be to build a "bridge of reason" to a warless world. Dr. Alcock hopes to have a Canadian Peace Research Institute going this year. In an address in Ontario last December, he said:

Unfortunately, we have discovered the wrong things first. The first thing we should have discovered was the answer to the social problem of

how man can get along with himself. The last thing should have been the development of weapons.

The research peace institutes will seek to "redress the imbalance of science." The plan is that these institutes shall be independent, yet gain some of their support from governments, enjoy free communication with similar institutes in other countries (using only unclassified data), yet work closely with their own country's departments of state and defense. Moreover, the participating scientists are to be "well-paid."

So far as we can see, the most important thing that these scientists are likely to find out—supposing they do get to work—is that it is impossible to work for revolutionary change and at the same time be "well-paid" collaborators with national governments. Yet Dr. Alcock's pamphlet, *The Bridge of Reason*, in which he explains the peace research institute program, has the ring of honest conviction. And if the people who start out by working in such a program eventually learn that a less "contained" institution is necessary, in order to say what they think, some of them may find other ways to be heard. Single copies of *The Bridge of Reason* may be ordered at fifty cents from the John Wilkes Press, Oakeville, Ontario, Canada.

# CHILDREN

## . . . and Ourselves

### DISCUSSION ON NON-MEAT DIETS

OUR discussion of vegetarianism (MANAS, April 18) was intended to be provocative, and was, judging from reader response. The subject came up as a natural sequence to publication of material on "the new pacifism," as a phase of idealism with which young people should at least be acquainted. It then appeared that "exploration of all potentially constructive deviations from conventional attitudes should be attempted," and the determination of many pacifists to live without dependence upon the slaughterhouse was a logical instance. Two things now appear clear from the letters we have received.

First, a number of MANAS readers have been on a fleshless diet for some time, for reasons pretty well described in our previous issue. When we referred "to the determination, among a growing minority, to live on a meatless diet to spare what may be a great deal of unnecessary suffering for animals, to encourage further respect for life in all animate forms, and to conserve the diminishing acreage of food-producing land," we seem—to use an out-of-place metaphor—to have caught a bull by the tail, since the ramifications of this topic are endless and it is hard to know where to stop. Here are typical letters received:

Glad to see MANAS take up the question of vegetarianism sympathetically and at some length. I've not eaten meat for about seven years now, without any perceptible ill effects on health—and I do manual work for a living.

Living for a time in a vegetarian household was a great help in breaking the commitment barrier. One day I resolved not to eat my next piece of beefsteak until I could kill the cow that produced it. . . .

One comment I would like to make about vegetarianism: I have been a strict vegetarian now for fifteen years, and an extraordinarily healthy one!—without particular study. I have some elementary knowledge of nutrition, but as to enzymes, amino acids and the rest, I am totally ignorant. But I use juices daily, and an abundance of vegetables, plus some form of protein—cheese, eggs, soya beans (that so versatile vegetable!) and gluten products. I realize that you must urge care upon your readers, but what I mean to say is

that no one need excuse himself from excluding meat from his diet by pleading lack of time for study.

It is true that enjoyable non-meat dishes take a good deal of time in preparation—as well as imagination. In our society, vegetarianism is difficult. "Loma Linda" and such groups help, but it is still not easy to find meat substitutes. Perhaps if, or as, the momentum increases, and the market grows, the whole thing will become easier (delete the "perhaps"!).

It is a big subject. We hereabouts have given many hours to it. I applaud all your arguments in favour of it.

One correspondent sent us a paper, "The Free Soul," he wrote for publication some five years ago, after going on a fleshless diet. These paragraphs seem relevant:

Let no one dismiss the idea of vegetarianism, believing that it cannot concern him. The quest for an innocent diet may be said to be universally present. All but a few of the peoples of the earth regard human flesh as an improper food, tho it is doubtless nourishing, always close at hand, never in short supply, and from available evidence quite palatable, being somewhat sweet in taste.

Why do we feel this revulsion at making a meal of a fellow human? Is it not because of a deep feeling of kinship with others of our species?—that the destiny of their bodies ought not to be to grace a platter at dinner, nor their last act of service to furnish a square meal for their enemies? The popular mind does not see beyond the wrongness of eating fellow humans; but men can nourish their innate sense of kinship, widening and deepening it so that it comes to include all creatures. . . .

Objections to the adoption of a fleshless diet are commonly raised by those who refuse to face the basic issues. "Look at the cruelty of animals in the jungle and creatures in the sea, the way they devour each other," they say. "That's the way nature is."

First of all, the lower animals are not immoral, but amoral, belonging as they do to a realm congenitally incapable of consciousness of self and of free choice, which alone make morality possible. Second, the seeming cruelty of the animal world does not excuse the genuine cruelty of man's wanton slaughter. Man is called to witness to the greater possibilities for creative relationship that lie dormant within him. Gandhi put it this way. "Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute."

Any discussion of the vegetarian idea brings in a number of distinguished thinkers of the past. For instance, when in Walden Woods Thoreau wrote this: "He will be regarded as a benefactor of his race

who shall teach man to confine himself to a more innocent and wholesome diet. Whatever my own practice may be, I have no doubt that it is a part of the destiny of the human race, in its gradual improvement, to leave off eating animals, as surely as the savage tribes have left off eating each other. . . . The faintest assured objection which one healthy man feels will at length prevail over the arguments and customs of mankind." And how many have noticed this passage from Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*:

No doubt the first man that ever murdered an ox was regarded as a murderer; perhaps he was hung; and if he had been put on his trial by oxen he certainly would have been; and he certainly deserved it if any murderer does. Go to the meatmarket of a Saturday night and see the crowds of live bipeds staring up at the long rows of dead quadrupeds. Does not that sight take a tooth out of a cannibal's jaw? Cannibals? Who is not a cannibal? I tell you it will be more tolerable for the Feejee that salted down a lean missionary in his cellar against a coming famine; it will be more tolerable for that Feejee, I say, in the day of judgment, than for thee, civilized and enlightened gourmand, who nailest geese to the ground and featest on their bloated livers in thy paté-de-foie-gras.

Finally, appropriate to consideration of the relationship between the attitudes which support animal killing and the attitudes which support war, there is this portion of Book Two of Plato's *Republic*:

Here Glaucon interrupted me: You seem to expect your citizens to feast on dry bread.

True, I said; I forgot that they will have something to give it a relish, salt, no doubt, and olives, and cheese, and country stews of roots and vegetables. And for dessert we will give them figs and peas and beans; and they shall roast myrtleberries and acorns at the fire, while they sip their wine. Leading such a healthy life in peace they will naturally come to a good old age, and leave their children to live after them in the same manner.

That is just the sort of provender you would supply, Socrates, if you were founding a community of pigs.

Well, how are they to live, then, Glaucon?

With the ordinary comforts. Let them lie on couches and dine off tables on such dishes and sweets as we have nowadays.

Ah, I see, said I; we are to study the growth, not just of a state, but of a luxurious one. Well, there may be no harm in that; the consideration of luxury may help us

to discover how justice and injustice take root in a society. The community I have described seems to me the ideal one, in sound health as it were: but if you want to see one suffering from inflammation, there is nothing to hinder us. So some people, it seems will not be satisfied to live in this simple way, they must have . . . and here follows a generous catalogue of luxuries. . . .

And then swineherds—there was no need for them in our original state, but we shall want them now; and a great quantity of sheep and cattle, too, if people are going to live on meat.

Of course.

And with this manner of life physicians will be in much greater request.

No doubt.

The country, too, which was large enough to support the original inhabitants, will now be too small. If we are to have enough pasture and plough land, we shall have to cut off a slice of our neighbours' territory; and if they too are not content with necessaries, but give themselves up to getting unlimited wealth, they will want a slice of ours.

That is inevitable, Socrates.

So the next thing will be, Glaucon, that we shall be at war.

No doubt.

We need not say yet whether war does good or harm, but only that we have discovered its origin in desires which are the most fruitful source of evils both to individuals and to states.

Quite true.

Well, we are more and more convinced that this is a live and interesting subject, since it involves areas of personal reflection and possible decision entirely outside the bounds of politics. We have no desire to convert anyone to a meatless diet, yet there is a distinct appeal in the defense of fleshless eating for those who wish to live without support of nuclear armament races and in the spirit of "reverence for life."

## *FRONTIERS*

### **The Promise of World Law**

IN MANAS for March 21, in the lead article, "A Pre-Political Program," it was stated:

World law is a wonderful idea—an obvious idea, one might say—but it won't work without the development of qualities and skills which are the endowment of people in whom the good rises as a natural expression of their lives so that when they turn to politics, they expect of whatever form of social contract they devise only what it is capable of doing for them, and no more. If these qualities and skills are not present, world law will fall flat on its face.

A reader active in the movement for the establishment of world law makes the following comment:

Since municipal law works without said qualities, and state law works without them, and national law works without them, I see no reason to deny that world law (or regional law or any other area of law) will not work without them.

Don't you weaken your case by a dogmatic statement like this?

And another question: why go out of your way to attack a good?

Those of us who are giving our efforts to the effort to eliminate war between the nations in the same practical way it has been eliminated between tribes, cities, provinces, dukedoms and states, believe this is the most important step for good that mankind could take. Why do you fight us and try to undermine our efforts?

The first thing which ought to be said, it seems to us, is that our article was an attempt at constructive criticism, not an attack. Nothing would be more discouraging to people generally if an attempt to establish world law or government should gain a partial success, and then turn into an abortive failure. There are prerequisites for any sort of working political association: we tried to say what those prerequisites are for a world society. We should like to see more emphasis on the prerequisites, and less on the abstract promise of the legal forms. If this amounts to "fighting" the people who are trying for a world order, we

must plead guilty. We regard our effort as rather a form of intelligent support.

The campaigners for world government, world federation, and world law give much attention to the similarities between the proposed world order and the order achieved by smaller political units such as those listed by our correspondent. The drawing of attention to these similarities without equal attention to and analysis of the differences turns the campaign into a would-be reform by propaganda instead of a serious projection of the indications and conclusions of social science. This is too important an undertaking for its supporting arguments to consist mainly of debaters' points.

In practice, the constitution which gives form to a political association is a carefully balanced compromise of conflicting material interests and social ideals. The analytical separation and identification of the factors which go into the making of a successful constitution is a difficult task. The part played by self-interest in the devising of constitutions cannot be ignored. Self-interest, furthermore, is as complex a form of motivation as any other broad category of drives in human behavior. For self-interest to gain rational expression in a legal instrument, it has to be recognized, admitted, agreed upon, and implemented in ways that have the common consent of the participating parties to the constitution.

Obviously, both ideal and material interests would be served by the creation of a community of world law. But it is equally obvious that considerable development in human perception of value will have to take place before these possibilities of a world community can be generally recognized. Such recognition would amount to a practical revolution in ideas of value in respect even to self-interest. The argument with our correspondent concerns the question of how to achieve this recognition to the point of its becoming a major reality, and it concerns very little else.

The men who made the American Constitution were representative men. That is, they commanded practical power and they enjoyed constituencies made up of men with practical power. The ideas of self-interest to be served by the constitution were understood, or became understood, with a sufficiency which turned a draft of law into a functioning political organism.

For world law to become a comparable political organism, there needs to be a similar realism in respect to the importance of the services to be gained by the adoption of a world constitution.

The argument for world law from social and ethical ideals is valid and obvious. It supplies the basic moral inspiration for all the movements for a world order, or for some degree of world order. The argument for world law from self-interest is also valid in intellectual terms—but it is an argument from *enlightened* self-interest.

How do you turn self-interest into *enlightened* self-interest? How do you help people to see where their *long-term* self-interest lies? These are the important questions. People without enough enlightened self-interest will not even bother to listen to arguments which are founded on values they neither see and understand nor wish to see and understand.

The campaigners for world law ought to turn these questions over to a committee of cooperating psychologists, or become social psychologists themselves, in order to find the answers, or rather some working hypotheses, with which to proceed. These questions, we propose, are fundamental issues of character formation involving much more than arguments from the analogy of national states.

A constitution which does not fit deeply sensed needs on the part of the people who are ruled by it will either not be adopted or will soon be discarded.

Some sagacious man ought to take Randolph Bourne's principle, "War is the health of the State," and work it backwards to find out what kind of a state is possible without war and what the condition of its health will be. How much of the internal tranquility (such as it is) of the existing power states is owed to the notion of military security against *other* power states?

As for the claim that municipal, state, and national law has worked to eliminate violence this has only a relative validity. Disregarding political boundaries, modern peoples have accomplished far more slaughter of human beings than the less politically organized societies of antiquity. The kind of peace the constitutions thus far have provided is the peace described by William James: war in *posse* instead of war *in actu*. The domestic tranquility of the national state has created the conditions for progress in the techniques of annihilation. It has done other things, of course, many of them good, but we are talking about the relation of constitutions to *war*.

On the other side of the ledger is the fact that many or most of the men of good will in our time support the idea of world law or world government. This idea is a symbol for so many of the dreams of human beings that it could hardly be otherwise. Further, groups working for a world order are often educational instruments which give currency to admirable ideals that need to be spread around among all peoples. Our point is simply that a social order with some prospect of success must be morally viable, with all that this implies, before it can gain a viable political expression.